

Toronto

Ontario sees 658 new COVID-19 cases, majority in Toronto and surrounding regions

Meanwhile, 1,500 people attended anti-lockdown rally at Yonge and Dundas Saturday

CBC News · Posted: Oct 18, 2020 10:18 AM ET | Last Updated: October 18, 2020



Despite soaring case counts in Toronto, upwards of 1,000 people took part in an anti-lockdown rally on Saturday at Yonge-Dundas Square in protest of provincial restrictions to curb the spread of COVID-19. (Rob Krbavac/CBC)

[comments](#)

Ontario recorded 658 new COVID-19 cases on Sunday, with nearly two-thirds reported in Toronto and its surrounding regions.

Sunday's update marks the first time the provincial case count has dipped below 700 since Oct. 11.

Health Minister Christine Elliott says 197 of the latest cases were reported in Toronto, while 155 were recorded in Peel Region and 94 in York Region. Ottawa, meanwhile, reported 66 new cases on Sunday.

Sunday's provincial COVID-19 numbers came out of roughly 40,900 completed tests. There's currently a backlog of 23,609 tests waiting to be processed.

Provincial case numbers last week, while still high, did not reach the single-day record of 939 new diagnoses reported Oct. 9.

In spite of Toronto's soaring numbers, some 1,500 anti-mask protesters flooded one of the city's busiest intersections on Saturday.

Local police said a school bus with a loudspeaker that had been parked on the sidewalk near Yonge-Dundas Square had to be moved.

Video from the scene shows throngs of maskless demonstrators holding signs as they fill the street outside the Eaton Centre.

Health and government officials have slammed the demonstrators, who have been holding rallies in large groups without masks for the past few months in protest of provincial restrictions to curb the spread of COVID-19.

4 COVID-19 hot spots move to modified Stage 2

Meanwhile, the province announced Friday that York Region was joining the other three COVID-19 hot spots in moving back to a modified Stage 2 of pandemic protocol starting Monday.

Toronto, Peel Region and Ottawa were placed under similar restrictions amid rising cases a week ago.

- [Restrictions on care home visits traumatize families, caregivers](#)
- [York Region moving to modified Stage 2 amid surge of new COVID-19 cases, premier says](#)

The modified Stage 2 includes the closure of gyms and movie theatres, a ban on indoor dining in restaurants or bars, and restrictions capping public gatherings at 10 people indoors and 25 people outdoors.

The tighter measures will be in place for 28 days.

Nearly 100 cases school-related

Meanwhile, the number of patients in Ontario hospitals with confirmed infections of the novel coronavirus dropped by 31 to 247. The Ministry of Health says some 40 hospitals don't submit data on weekends, which means the real number of hospitalizations is likely higher than reported.

Those requiring intensive care fell by one, down to 71, while the number of patients on ventilators increased by one, up to 43.

Ontario now has a total of 64,371 cases of COVID-19, including 55,371 that are considered resolved. Some 685 cases were marked resolved in Sunday's update.

The province's official COVID-19 death toll, meanwhile, grew by five and now sits at 3,046.

Apart from the province's four hot spots, other areas that saw double-digit increases Sunday include:

- Durham Region: 45.
- Halton Region: 29.
- Simcoe Muskoka: 18.
- Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health: 13.
- Hamilton: 11.

According to the Ministry of Health, 98 of Sunday's new cases are school-related. Of those, 55 cases are among students, 12 are among staff and 31 people are categorized as "individuals not identified."

To date there has been a total of 1,242 school-related COVID-19 cases reported across Ontario.

2 Toronto hospitals declare COVID-19 outbreaks

Meanwhile, St. Joseph's Health Centre and Toronto Western Hospital confirmed 29 cases of COVID-19 attributed to outbreaks between both hospitals.

On Sunday, University Health Network (UHN) confirmed three patients and six staff members within two different units at Toronto Western Hospital had contracted the virus as of Friday.

The hospital, near Bathurst and Dundas Streets, has previously declared several [other COVID-19 outbreaks](#), with the first on April 18, and multiple others in the weeks following.

Also as of Sunday morning, St. Joseph's Health Centre confirmed 20 cases of the virus in their facility. The hospital admitted 16 patients into their COVID-19 unit, seven of which are attributed to their outbreak, while 13 staff members also tested positive for the virus.

You can read more about those outbreaks [here](#).

With files from The Canadian Press.

[CBC's Journalistic Standards and Practices](#) | [About CBC News](#)

[Corrections and clarifications](#) | [Submit a news tip](#) | [Report error](#) ▼

Popular Now in Toronto

- 1 Clash with local health unit drains hot tubs at some Ontario resorts**
- 2 Jamaican migrant workers in Ontario pen open letter likening conditions to 'systematic slavery'**
- 3 Top epidemiologist resigns from Ontario's COVID-19 science table, alleges withholding of 'grim'**

projections

4 3 siblings, all under 20 years old, killed in fiery Brampton car crash

5 Police release images of woman believed to have been kidnapped in Scarborough

©2022 CBC/Radio-Canada. All rights reserved.

Visitez Radio-Canada.ca